

Poznań, May 20th, 2024

**Position of the Conference of Rectors of Polish Universities
on the hostilities in the Gaza Strip**

On behalf of the Polish university community, we appeal to the authorities and peoples of the countries of Israel and Palestine to put an end to the bloody conflict, which is currently escalating into a slaughter of civilians carried out on behalf of both the State of Israel and Hamas terrorists.

We live in a world where armed conflict is escalating, where guns, tanks and rockets are replacing dialogue and cooperation. As human beings, as academics, as people responsible to young people not only for the quality of education but also for the values we pass on to them, we feel obliged to respond to the situation in Gaza.

The attack on Israel's defenceless civilian population by Hamas terrorists last October came as a shock to everyone. However, nothing justifies the direction in which the actions of the State of Israel affecting civilians in Gaza are developing. No retaliation at the expense of civilians, children, women, young people who should be enjoying life, getting an education, engaging in peaceful dialogue with their peers of other nationalities and views, will bring an end to the conflict; it will only bring pain and despair to thousands of people, a desire for revenge and an escalation of aggression.

Observing the Russian-ignited war on our eastern border, receiving refugees from Ukraine, and talking to Ukrainian university colleagues on a daily basis, we see how destructive - and not only for the nation attacked - hostilities are. As citizens of a country affected by the nightmare of the two great wars of the 20th century, we also know that reconciliation between nations that survived bloody conflicts is possible. Today, Poland and Germany, within the framework of the European Union, are cooperating in a lasting and fruitful way for the good of the entire continent.

Once again, we appeal to all parties involved to end the conflict and cease hostilities!



Prof. Dr. Bogumiła Kaniewska
President of the Conference